

Great Lovers "

may, of course, have been merely stirred
by boyish
recollection, but Tahiti is a land of
such sticks.
The *bura*o tree—the wild hibiscus—
haunts the river
banks and makes thickets wherever it
gets a chance.
Its bark peels easily in great strips of
the toughest
vegetable fibre still used universally by
the natives
for tying anything, from a roof-pole to a
fishing net,
that needs to be tied. They break the
long straight
sticks of *bura*o, peel them and throw
the sticks
away. Tramping through the *bura*o
thickets—
small shady forests in places—my
imagination was
caught also by the sweet long clean
white rods.
They strew the path, gleaming, very
light in
weight, and I have rarely come home
from a walk
without one, gathered idly for the
pleasure of it,
By the house of Mataiea is one such
wood, and
I am certain he came whistling down
it in the
gloaming and ^r loved * its new-peeled
sticks,
Tetuanui remembered him well.

117